

GENERAL REVIEW
OF
MEN AND MEASURES:

OCCASIONED BY
R E M A R K S
OF NEAR AND ACCURATE OBSERVERS,
PLAIN ANSWERS,
AND REPLIES TO PLAIN ANSWERS,

Sc. Sc.

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R E M A R K S

OF NEAR AND ACCURATE OBSERVERS,

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AND REPLIES TO PLAIN ANSWERS,

&c. &c.

BY A MORE DISTANT OBSERVER,

OUT OF THE VORTEX OF PARTY.

He that covereth a transgression seeketh love : but he that repeateth
a matter separateth *very* friends. PROV. xvii. 9.

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P R E F A C E.

THE Roman Patricians, who, in the latter days of the Republic, travelled about that great city with a numerous retinue of attendants, armed, and on horseback, had frequent altercations, and sometimes much blood was shed, owing to the officious zeal of those who were their followers. The masters could pass by without manifesting hatred, or aggravating each other's wrongs by personal insult: it was not so with their servants; nor is it so in modern times

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with those who wish to shew their attachment to statesmen, by attacking their supposed rivals or enemies; for, in the great world, those terms are synonymous.

The intention of the following Pamphlet is to shew, that the adherents of Mr. Pitt and Mr. Addington have acted very imprudently, in beginning a Paper War, in which reciprocal abuse is distributed with a lavish hand, and by men who, though they boast of being NEAR AND ACCURATE OBSERVERS, do not appear to enter into the real merits of the question. They seem not to know the true interests of those whose cause they so warmly espouse, and to want candour in the application of the personalities in which their works abound.

Mr.

Mr. Pitt appears to be improperly attacked, as having forfeited his word with Mr. Addington, to whose administration he is said to have promised a general and unlimited support. His attachment to Lords Spencer and Grenville is blamed with equal indelicacy, and want of attention to circumstances; but, on the other hand, Mr. Addington and his colleagues have been traduced without mercy, as men void of understanding, and drivellers incapable of conducting national concerns, even in their most ordinary situation, much less in so dangerous a crisis as the present.

Courteous Reader! do not be led astray; all those assertions are equally groundless; the faithlessness of the Pittites, and imbecility of

the Addingtonians, are only phantasmagoria, drawn or sketched by men who neither understand the interests nor the feelings of the Gentlemen with whose conduct they take such ill-advised and unwarrantable liberties.

GENERAL REVIEW

OF

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OCCASIONED BY

*Remarks of Near and Accurate Observers, Plain
Answers, and Replies to Plain Answers,
&c. &c.*

BY A MORE DISTANT OBSERVER,
OUT OF THE VORTEX OF PARTY.

THE differences of opinion that have for some time past been more than suspected, and are of late become abundantly evident, between the present Ministers and their predecessors, have been productive of several pamphlets fraught both with panegyric and abuse.

Those who are nearest an object do not always see it best, and they never take the most general view. As in perspective the objects are distorted to the eye of a too near observer, so in
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forming opinions of actions passed immediately under our view, we are often led astray by an undue proximity.

Why the merits of the present and last administration must be compared and contrasted with so much anxiety, is difficult for a true friend to his country to determine ; if general good and information is the object, the more direct road would be to examine the past conduct of the present men, estimating from that its effect on the future interests of the nation. There seems to be no necessity for determining whether the present or last administration possesses the greatest share of talents, particularly as it was not want of abilities in the former ministers that occasioned their removal from the offices which they held.

I take it that the most important question is, how the Ministers have acquitted themselves for the advantage of the nation since they came into place, and from what is past, to conclude what may be expected to come.

At the time when the present men obtained the confidence of his Majesty, the nation was fatigued with a long and expensive war, to which

which the haughty demeanor of their predecessors offered no hopes of a speedy termination. The cause of that war had been ill defined at the beginning, and the management of it had undergone such variations as indicated a vacillation of councils and a change of the object in view, which forbade us to hope for unanimity amongst ourselves, and had deprived us, one after another, of the assistance of all our allies. The haughty mode in which we had carried ourselves towards the French, even after we had condescended to treat with them, had shut up the door to all hopes of fresh overtures on their part, and of consequence subjected us to a great disadvantage in a renewal of any future treaty with them.

The writers who have taken upon them to defend the opposite parties, chiefly attach themselves to a part of the question the least important in itself, and but ill adapted for shedding lustre on the conduct of either. From the *Cursory Remarks of a Near Observer*, we learn that Mr. Pitt, when he abandoned his post, and Mr. Addington succeeded to it, pledged himself in a *general and unlimited* manner to support the administration of the latter. As he has not done so, bitter reproaches

reproaches are bestowed upon him ; but whether the terms in which he promised his support were unqualified or not, it will be readily confessed, that the terms in which he is reproached are sufficiently unqualified. Although there are matters of much more importance for us to discuss, yet this subject has already attracted great attention, having become the Shibboleth of the parties : let us see what is its real import and tendency.

If Mr. Pitt really promised *general* support to an administration occupying the ground which he had abandoned, and with an avowed intention, or, at least, an implied condition, that they would not support the measure respecting the Roman Catholics of Ireland, then was he guilty of the most shameful tergiversation. He was guilty of deceiving the Roman Catholics, whose cause he was bound never to abandon, even if he could not procure for them what he promised and intended. The support of Mr. Addington's administration was not only the abandonment of that promise, but went very nearly towards taking the opposite side of the question, and every man of strict honour would have conceived, that it amounted to a complete dereliction of principle ; in that case,

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how could Mr. Addington trust to the promises of such a man ? Would he, who had for convenience sake given up his place, and abandoned his Sovereign in a moment of danger ; who had betrayed the Roman Catholics of Ireland, after having extorted from them the price of his promise ; would he, I say, be more faithful to Mr. Addington ? Would a promise made in secret, and for which no equivalent was received, be held sacred by a man, who, in the very act of making that promise, had violated his faith to a million of people ? No ; Mr. Pitt did not deserve credit, if he made such a promise ; and Mr. Addington never could be so shallow a politician, so little hacknied in the ways of men, as to have believed him under such circumstances, for a single moment.

As to a promise of support with respect to *certain* measures, or as far as his own opinion might go with that support, Mr. Pitt was at liberty to give it without broken faith or dishonour to himself ; Mr. Addington might therefore believe him on his word. That he should expect his administration would be such, as to meet, in general, with the approbation and support of Mr. Pitt is also possible, and there is no

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thing improbable in the supposition, that Mr. Pitt might likewise conceive the same opinion ; but if it turned out otherwise, that was only error, not breach of faith. I cannot for a moment suppose Mr. Addington to be weak enough, to promise to be guided by Mr. Pitt *in every case*, or to suppose Mr. Pitt capable of undertaking to support measures, in the adoption of which he was not even to be consulted. I therefore am bound, unless I suppose mutual deception, knavery, and dupery, of no ordinary magnitude, to have taken place, to believe, that these two gentlemen acted on very different principles from what the authors of the pamphlets appear to imagine.

I know no trait in the character either of the Minister who resigned, or of his successor, to warrant the belief, that they could for one moment have entered into so absurd a negotiation ; and unless they did, I see no reason for blaming Mr. Addington for not following the counsels of Mr. Pitt, or for lavishing abuse on Mr. Pitt, because he no longer gives his support to the measures of Mr. Addington.

I am inclined to believe, and I do believe, that
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the contest of the pamphleteers * is not with the previous knowledge of their principals, and that they either do not possess, or have not given, the true state of the transaction.

That Mr. Pitt, and a majority of his coadjutors in office, found it necessary to bring a war to a termination, which had exceeded all former ones in expence, and become highly unpopular, is no secret. The approbation they bestowed on the peace is a positive proof that they did so, and under the impression that they neither could, with honor to themselves, or advantage to their country, negotiate that peace : at the same time, not wishing to harass their successors (but on the contrary, desirous of assisting in a measure, which they thought necessary for the good of their country), they gave a specific promise of support in that great measure, together with a general declaration, that they had no intention of becoming hostile to those *men* in whom the Sovereign had reposed his confidence. This, however, never could be construed into an *un-*

* The pamphlets alluded to principally, are, *Cursory Remarks on the State of Parties, by a Near Observer.*—*A Plain Answer to Cursory Remarks.*—*A Plain Reply to the Plain Answer ; and a Reply to the Plain Answer.*

qualified support of every measure; neither could the ex-ministers mean to imply, that, *where they did not approve, they would remain silent spectators*, and abandon every idea of opposition, leaving thereby their duty to their country unperformed.

Such being the implied and intended co-operation, the charges that have been made fall to the ground, so far as they are founded on the opposition given to the present measures.

I know of no case, where honourable and able men can agree to support each other, in an unlimited sense of the word, except where they have equal voices in the measures to be adopted. I say, therefore, that under no circumstances could the supposed compact have taken place.* I say farther, that it never did take place, and that Mr. Addington himself would not have written what is contained in the *Accurate*

* Something similar did take place in France, in the year 1790, when both king and people swore to be faithful to a constitution then scarcely begun to be framed. The absurdity of this was evident to all the world, and nobody was surprized when all parties violated the engagement into which they had so improvidently entered.

Observer,"

Observer on that subject ; he has too much candour, and knows facts and the honourable disposition of Mr. Pitt too well, to have for a moment given his countenance to such a charge.

When the adherents of different parties quarrel (like two Newfoundland dogs in Hyde park) they may thereby implicate the honour and risque the lives of their masters, who are led unwillingly and unaware into a contest of which they highly disapprove. I take the present to be one of the cases, where the principals, though they may applaud the zeal, do not altogether approve of the wisdom of their adherents, the only tendency of whose conduct is, to make those things which both parties wish to conceal, be promulgated to all the world.

The creed of the politician is not, nor ought it to be, in public matters, exactly the same with that of the private individual acting in ordinary life ; candour and open conduct would, in many cases, counteract the fair ends of the man who is entrusted with the interests of his country. It might have been very wise and patriotic in the Pitt ministry to resign, if they thought that they stood in the way of peace ; yet it certainly

tainly would have been very imprudent and prejudicial to the interests of the country, had they avowed such a motive for giving in their resignation.

The arrogant man, to whose ambition it was their aim to fix a barrier, would in consequence of such an avowal, have become ten times more difficult, and perhaps that very peace which it was their intention to obtain, might have been rendered impracticable by so imprudent a disclosure. In such a case, to assign another motive than the true, was clearly not only legitimate, but wise and proper; and those whose zeal would lead them to probe the business to the bottom, do not deserve to receive the thanks of any party in this country.

To see a ministry in the full possession of their Sovereign's confidence, with a large majority in both houses of parliament; a Treasury in better condition than it had been during the first 5 years of the war; the commerce of the nation greatly augmented, and the internal manœuvres for the disturbance of tranquillity entirely crushed; the union with Ireland effected; to see a ministry resign under such circumstances was a novel phenomenon.

menon. It appeared to be a voluntary abandonment of power and place, which is rare and difficult to account for. The voluntary resignation and retirement of Charles of Spain might be, and was set down to the account of religion or disgust; but that all the members of a cabinet, of different ages; not similar in private character nor pursuits, and unequally provided for, should act unanimously and voluntarily in such a case, was inexplicable and unexampled, and in proportion as it excited surprise, it produced enquiry. Another circumstance, no less uncommon, was to see a sort of harmony and good intelligence subsist between the leading members of the last cabinet, and those who succeeded them; but they must have been very shallow politicians indeed who could imagine that the same co-operation was to be continued, or extended to measures not then in view, or in agitation. Why then that independant spirit which every honest man ought to maintain, is not to be allowed to those ministers, who to some motive of opinion (for it was evidently not to necessity) yielded up places, power, and profit, is beyond conception. I do not blame the Near Observer, for zeal in the cause he has espoused, but for imprudence in the exercise of that zeal, by which

imprudence

imprudence he brings questions on the carpet which ought never to be discussed.

Next after the blame thrown on Mr. Pitt for not continuing his support, his *unqualified, uninterrupted support*, to the measures of his successor, he is loaded with reproach for entering into negotiation, and insisting on terms which were inadmissible. A man of honour might have conceived, that when Mr. Pitt and his colleagues quitted their official situation, they were bound to each other by *some* promises, that might, in *certain* cases, influence their future conduct. If there were any members of the late administration, who may have been supposed unwilling to pave the way for peace by their resignation, Lords *Spencer, Grenville*, and *Mr. Windham* were the men, and those seem to be the very persons to whom Mr. Pitt's attachment is peculiarly offensive to the *Near Observer*. If Mr. Pitt, however, did prevail on those men, who considered any peace likely to be obtained as a national calamity, to quit their places for the sake of an experiment, he was surely bound, in honour to them, not to return to office without their having the option of bearing him company. I say this can be supposed, without thinking Mr. Pitt
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an interested overbearing statesman, who wished to come in, dictating his conditions, and at the head of his friends ; yet such and no less are the accusations which a Near Observer brings against him.

As for the conduct of *Lord Grenville*, *Earl Spencer*, and *Mr. Windham*, it appears to me to have been uniform and consistent. I do not therefore conceive, that it needs any apology from my pen, neither indeed did I put it to paper with a view to justify the conduct of either of the parties, but rather to shew that those who estimate merits by comparison, assume a false criterion, and do not take the way that is the best or most advantageous ; and it is this conduct which I blame, that has dragged me into the present enquiry.

I shall now, however, quit the ungrateful, useless, and disagreeable task of comparing men, and take a review of the administration of Mr. Addington, which, in my opinion, has been treated with a very unjustifiable species of severity, on more than one occasion, from more than one quarter.

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Allowing

Allowing to their predecessors the merit of having laid the foundation for the glorious achievements of British valour on the plains of Egypt, and at the mouth of the Baltic; I will maintain that the new ministers had a species of merit of which their predecessors in office could never boast. They were modest, and moderate in the hour of success, even when the great and important point had been ascertained, that by land as well as by sea, the British soldiers were fully equal to the veteran legions of the republic. Moderation in prosperity, that first and most precious of gifts, was one, with which, unfortunately for this nation, Mr. Pitt and his coadjutors were never blest; the first discussions with the French republicans in 1792, the affected dignity of Lord Grenville, and the inflexible perseverance of Mr. Pitt, had given a sort of repulsive and ungracious form to every thing that had the appearance of leading the way to conciliation. As if ignorant that a great change had been wrought on the minds of men; and that the current of opinion which tended to republican simplicity, owed its violence more to an overcharged form and etiquette
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that had prevailed in the courts of kings, than to any intrinsic advantages resulting from itself; they rambled, like the Baron of Thunderton Tronke, who, when tugging at the oar, swore that his sister should never intermarry with a plebeian family.

Far am I from looking upon formalities as trifles, or from considering nothing essential that is not directly tending to the point immediately in question, but still I blame those who mistake the scaffold for the pile. I blame the ministry of Lord North, who would not listen to the American congress, because it was not a regular constitutional assembly. I blame Lord Grenville in like manner for his haughty conduct to M. Chauvelin, to Bonaparte, and to M. Otto. Atlas, we are told, carried the world on his shoulders, and Lord Grenville appears to have considered himself as supporting the whole of the dignity and importance of the British empire.

Mr. Addington relieved us at once from this turgid and vain parade, dearly maintained at the price of so much blood and treasure as it had cost the nation; and what is more, the real dignity of the nation gained by the abandoning of

this outward show, inasmuch as the conduct of Lord Cornwallis was more dignified than that of Lord Malm-bury. The former at least returned with the honours due to the representative of a great sovereign, the latter we remember *crept into France like a spy, and was sent out of it like a conspirator.*

When Mr. Addington, and those whom he had brought into office began to act, they professed to *lead*, but disclaimed all idea of *driving* the nation: the system of coercion that had reigned so long under the administration of the Right Honourable William Pitt, was then abandoned, to the great joy of the many, but to the regret of a certain class of men, who owed their chief importance to that very system of coercion.

All the inferior jacks in office, who had partaken of the authority of their masters, together with those loan contractors and others, who had enriched themselves at the expence of the public, and who branded with the epithet of traitors or jacobins, all who were not as vociferous as themselves in praise of Mr. Pitt, were enraged to see, that except in emoluments and wealth, they enjoyed no longer any superiority over the
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rest of his Majesty's subjects. At first it was insinuated that the new Ministers were only *puppets*, and that the wires were moved by Messrs. Pitt, and Co. from behind the curtain. *Want of capacity* was the grand leading feature of this new species of *fantocini* introduced upon the political stage, and the cry was repeated till it began to obtain some credit, not from the evidence of facts, but from the vulgar tho' received opinion, "that what every body says must be true." The unassuming manners of the calumniated men, the little encouragement given by them to spies and those intriguers who are the torment of society, all united to strengthen this opinion, and perhaps to this in a great measure do we owe the renewal of hostilities.

There is generally little difficulty in criticising measures that are past, and therefore the peace of *Amiens* may now meet with rigorous censure. It is not my business to enter into the vindication of that treaty, any farther than to say, that *at the time* it met with more general approbation, than any peace that has been concluded during the last century. Mr. Pitt, Mr. Fox, and all parties agreed that, all the circumstances taken into account, a better could not have been expected.

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The Grenville party alone, reduced to a very small number, were averse, not to the conditions of the peace only, but to peace on any terms with republican France.

The spirit of Mr. Burke hovered over their heads, and nothing short of the restoration of the Bourbons to the throne, and the emigrants to their estates, could ensure the prosperity of England in the stability of its government, in the opinion of those few men.

The smallness of this party, their exalted ways of thinking, make, to me, their opinion of little import; although I confess that I give them credit for the best intentions, and for no ordinary share of abilities.

The Peace of Amiens having then, *at the time*, met with such general approbation; whatever may have happened since, to cut short its duration, those by whom it was made were not to be blamed on that account.

We have found that the ambition of Bonaparte, the rapacity of the hordes he leads to battle and plunder, and the general disposition and habits

habits of the French nation, were inimical to the peace of this country, in common with the tranquillity of all others; but still it was wise, if not necessary, to ascertain so important a fact by experiment; for, until that was proved beyond all manner of doubt, how could this nation be unanimous? and if not unanimous, how could it exert all its energies? If France *was not* determined to destroy England, then was peace practicable and wise. If France *was* determined not to be at rest till our destruction was complete, still it was no less necessary to treat for peace, in order that we might know, to the fullest extent, the evil we had to resist, and exert the energy necessary. The latter case has, unfortunately, proved to be the real one; but the peace was no less wise on that account; we have seen the intention of our determined enemy; we have drawn the conclusion, and we are unanimous.

I should like to know from Mr. Windham, and the Grenvilles, if they think that a *heavy, plodding, beef-eating, beer-drinking nation* like this, could have ever been brought to a thorough conviction of its danger by syllogisms, metaphors, or all the declamation in the world. As cudgel-
playing

playing and bull-baiting animate Englishmen to acts of heroism more than the reading of Homer's Iliad, how could it be expected that any thing less than a positive proof of French villainy could convince John Bull? At one time, the party of which I speak, were the men who excited others to battle,

Ere ciere viros, martemque accendere cantu

was their motto. But what they could never completely succeed in doing, Mr. Addington, by a very simple contrivance, has done at once. He granted our enemies peace, but they would not keep it; so that now the most enlightened, and the most ignorant, all see how the matter stands, they are all now of one opinion.

Whether the Minister thought the French sincere or not, is a matter of little importance; in either case it was necessary to have a peace, and in either case it was requisite to begin to disarm, and act as if that peace was expected to be permanent, that we, by giving no pretext for a renewal of hostilities, might be certain that, if they did take place, it was entirely owing to our enemies, but not to ourselves, and that the whole nation might be convinced of that important fact.

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I do think the matter might have been conducted with more address: I do think that the unfair disposition of the French might have been made more manifest, if the affair of *Malta* had been otherwise conducted; but perhaps in this I am mistaken; that, however, is of very little importance; it is sufficient, that nothing but peace could make the nation unanimous, which was the most desirable of all objects.

In recommencing the war *without allies* I am at a loss to judge whether the Ministers acted from wisdom or necessity; for I am convinced that, even if allies could, in the first instance, have been obtained, still a single-handed contest is the only one that can insure our future peace and tranquillity. If we had a wish to have seven years more warfare, and to have in pay one half of Europe, while we fought the other half, and then, perhaps, have the whole to fight single-handed at last, we might have sought for allies before we begun. As it is, I think, our enemies ere long will meet with defeat, and then one half of Europe will come forward with effect, but without subsidy, to reduce France; if not to her antient limits, at least to

a degree of reason and moderation that will correspond with the peace and security of other nations.

When Joseph the Second had tormented his German subjects for twenty years, and involved them in war ; after he had stimulated the brave peasantry of Flanders and Brabant to open revolt, notwithstanding his firmness, his philosophy, and the cruelties of Dalton and his other Generals, matters grew still worse ; till the pacific Leopold mounted the throne, when, in a few months, he reduced every thing to order almost without exertion :—similar to this, in some degree, appears to be the situation of England. We made war with France in order that their principles might become odious to us, and that we might be united amongst ourselves ; but all this produced a very imperfect effect. A new minister rises up ; like Leopold, he makes peace, says nothing at all about opinions, but leaves us totally to ourselves ; when, as if by a sort of magic, we all become united in one opinion, and join our efforts to resist the enemy.

The conduct of Ministers, with regard to the volunteers, has met with more criticism than in
any

any other part of their administration ; but those who are so ready to censure, should consider the vast diversity of opinions that there have been on almost every regulation that has come into discussion, and from that may be concluded the magnitude and difficulty of the subject. It should also be remembered, that the very alterations which are blamed, without mercy, are proofs of a disposition to ameliorate the system and to take advice. At the end of seventeen years administration, during which error was never acknowledged, nor council taken, it is not surprising that the admirers of the rigid reign of iron should consider the flexibility of the present ministers as a foil to set off the conduct of their predecessors : they have no other alternative but that of contrasting two lines of conduct so directly opposite to the advantage of the one or the other party. Imbecility, versatility, and want of talents, are the fashionable accusations of the day ; and it must be allowed, that it is a very common case for the man who holds his head high, who acknowledges no human failing, and is always on his guard ; who admits of no familiarities from his friends, and is rigorous towards his enemies, to obtain credit for talents he does not possess, and a perfection which, in

this sublunary world, is not really to be attained—such a man conceals many of his faults. People are kept at too great a distance to discern others; and many that they do perceive, they are frightened to reveal.

It is not so with the man who admits of the familiarities of social life, and who had rather acknowledge error than persist in it. He inspires no terror, and having tacitly acknowledged his fallibility by altering his plans, there is neither *risque* nor rashness in trumpeting it forth to all the world.

We have thousands of characters every day, in common life, that exemplify this. On the great scale, perhaps Lewis the Fourteenth of France was the most complete model of a man holding up a false character to the world. Prevented from concealing many of his foibles, by the public manner in which a monarch is compelled to live, he, with unremitting attention, covered them with an appearance of grandeur, condescension, and generosity. In affairs, he never spoke but with an appearance of deep and profound reflection; he was rigid and determined; and even when he changed, it was not from
acknowledged

acknowledged error, or advice, but because it was done as an act of his own will, proceeding from his own observation.* When the false glitter and show was at an end, and the stately monarch was no more, still a long reign had so formed public opinion, that the same sort of deception was requisite to whoever would reign with ease and safety on the same throne; and so well was this known by a very *Accurate Observer* of that time (an English peer) that he predicted the fall of the French monarchy, whenever a man endowed with good nature, and without guile, should, unfortunately for himself, mount that uneasy seat.

In our days we have seen the prophecy fulfilled. We have seen one of the honestest and best

* This grand monarque, it is said, never allowed his valet de chambre to see him without his majestic peruke; and while he affected to reflect profoundly, he took care to dazzle his people with his splendour, so as to prevent their thinking at all.

Bonaparte imitates Lewis in many parts of his conduct; his mental abilities are of a far superior cast, but then again he wants the noble exterior, the winning manners; he is therefore reduced to have recourse to threats and intimidation, where the other gained his point by his noble air, and a smile of contempt.

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men in Europe ; a man who, in his adversity, when naked and alone, shewed a strength and rectitude of mind, a justness of conception, and a degree of firmness almost beyond human nature ; we saw that man hurled from his throne, because he was open, indulgent, and undisguised. History never furnished a greater contrast, nor fate never dealt out a more unequal destiny to two mortals, than to these two monarchs. The former, who in the vigour of life exhibited the hero, aped the philosopher, and personated the man of taste and genius, while he concealed an infinity of vices, was in the days of his decline an object of pity, and sunk in weakness even below the common degree to which imbecility of mind and superstition depress the human mind : his virtuous descendant, who scarcely could obtain credit for common abilities ; who was accused of several vices, though never found guilty of one ; who pardoned and forgave injuries, but was punished and traduced for benefits he bestowed, fell a sacrifice to his frankness, candour, and humanity ; and so much more permanent is the effect of public deception, carried on for years, than that of truth that shines out only for a moment, that he will ever be considered

as a weak monarch, unfit to govern the nation over which he was placed by his unfortunate destiny.

Mr. Addington must not expect that he will entirely escape the fate that awaits all men, who lay themselves open to their adversaries, by too much candour; he has power, let him use it with moderation and to a good purpose, but let not every little underling in office jeer at his abilities, in hopes that his predecessors in office will return.

When Mr. Pitt was in office, those who served under him seemed to think, that if he did not hold the place of first Lord of the Treasury *in fee simple, he at least held it for life*, and they were taught at a very early period to consider the present Ministers as *only tenants at will*; or holding by a very uncertain tenure indeed. When Facts are entirely out of the question, a belief of what does not, nor ever will exist, often regulates the conduct of men; and thus it is, that because the present Ministers are not considered as likely to remain long in office, they are served as temporary patrons even by those who enjoy their protection.

But to return to the volunteers: though it is
excusable

excusable to fall into a mistake by so new a system, and praise-worthy to follow advice ; it by no means follows, that every amelioration should be adopted, as it is often better to give stability and permanence to what is tolerable, than to be perpetually changing in search of what is better. The evils resulting from a changeable disposition, either in private or public life, are very great, for success only attends continued and prolonged exertion. In an affair like that of the volunteers, a steady conduct is necessary above all things, because there is not a single alteration that can be made, which does not in one way or another, interfere with either the rights or the duties of those men who have so honourably for themselves, come forward in the service of their country. I say that the regulations had better once for all, be made in a clear and simple manner, and then adhered to, unless some great imperfection is discovered, than to be altering and amending according to every plausible and well-meant modification.

It does not enter into my plan to canvas the regulations of the volunteer corps, but I cannot let the subject pass without observing, that as it is to the spirit of the country at large, and the loyalty of the individuals, that we owe this species of protection,

tion, every regulation ought to be made, with a view to second, but in no case to damp that spirit. While the enemy threatens our shores, there is no doubt but that even if the volunteers feel a little hurt, they will still be ready to fight in defence of their country ; in the course of events, however, the time must arrive, and it is probably at no great distance, when the enemy will either have attempted or abandoned his design. It will be then that the great dangers arising from having thwarted the volunteers will become evident and be felt. Much is due to the volunteers from justice, and something from policy ; and I must say, that several questions have been brought forward that had better been left undecided. There can be no excuse for first encouraging the decision of the justices, and the opinion of the Attorney General, * with respect to

* The origin of all the difficulty consisted in the frequent, irregular, and unexpected orders, given by several leaders of the corps. A man in business may more easily sacrifice two days at stated periods, or duly apprised, than one when it comes unexpectedly. Hence arose the necessity of absence, and offers to resign, and from those came all the other difficulties.

On this subject, I, however, differ both from the Attorney General and the court of King's Bench, and will give my reasons. What did the volunteer engage to do? To pre-

fines for non-attendance, and from the moment that the Court of King's Bench had decided the matter otherwise, abandoning every idea of obligation on the part of the Volunteer. No person will believe that this was done upon principle, but from necessity; and whenever the ship commands the pilot, and not the pilot the ship, things are in a dangerous situation.

I shall not touch upon the emoluments of office, or the provision for friends and family connections. As far as I have read the history of mankind, or studied the nature of man, I am led to know, that in every case attention to such advantages is natural, and to a certain extent right. There are instances of men, from pride, others from conscience, and some from negligence, retiring into indigence from the first offices of the state. I neither blame the pride, or principles, and I think the negligence but a venial crime. I cannot, however, consider that on that account

pare himself by exercising as a soldier to resist the French invasion, and to do his best to resist it when the attack should be made. I say then he had no right to resign till the attack was either made and the danger over, or till it was abandoned; as till one or other took place, the thing he had volunteered to do was not done.

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alone a minister deserves praise. I think the Duc de Sully, who saved millions for his master, who enriched even those whom he laid under contribution, though he did amass a princely fortune, acted a better and a wiser part than many of his successors, and among others Mr. Neckar, who would accept of no pecuniary reward; whose pride refused even fair remuneration, but who ruined his king, his country, and himself.

Mr. Addington is accused of placing family connections in offices of trust; but that appears to me to be not only natural, but in certain cases wise; for in addition to abilities, attachment to his person, and a knowledge of how far dependence can be placed on a coadjutor, are always desirable to a Minister. I think Mr. Bragge, for instance, is quite as fit for secretary at war, as Lord Chatham was for presiding over the Admiralty of England, or even as he is for the high office he now holds. I remember one of the most upright, honourable, and inflexible law lords this kingdom ever possessed, raised his brother to the most lucrative bishop's see that is in the gift of the crown: this created envy, but I do not recollect that it excited surprize, or occasioned blame.

With respect to their parliamentary conduct, the present Ministers act more conformably to the spirit of the constitution of England, than those who went immediately before them. In the last general election, less ministerial influence was exerted, than had been for thirty years before, (and but with one exception, for more than half a century); and even in some late thin attendances of members in the house, which have occasioned a momentary embarrassment, and excited a sneer, we can easily discern that the system of procuring stipulated or compulsive attendances is now abandoned. I like to see strict discipline in a regiment of soldiers, but not amongst the representatives of the country : I never wish to see the former become a deliberative body, nor the latter obey the word of command ; and I confess that I have much pleasure in observing that irregular species of bush-fighting which has of late taken place. I do not quarrel with men because they have some personal views, accompanied by a wish to render the public service ; I only blame them when they sacrifice their opinion for the sake of profit or emolument, or the interests of their country for their own.

I come

I come now to a very important part of the subject ; I mean the finances of the country ; and there I am afraid our present statesmen are at the greatest dilemma. It is from that quarter our country has the most to fear, and in that our Ministers, from concurrent circumstances, have the least to promise ; in fact it is the most difficult and arduous part of their duty.

I have reason to believe, that there is a deficiency for last year, and that the war taxes will never produce the sums at which they have been set down ; occasioned, in some degree, by the returns made by individuals of their property to the Commissioners ; for however vigilant and attentive in their situation, it is morally impossible to arrive at truth when men are bent on evasion ; so that our debt must continue to accumulate far beyond the rate at which Mr. Addington has given in his estimate.

In adhering to the wise system of the sinking fund, Mr. Addington deserves praise, but he has unfortunately destroyed or abandoned entirely the regulations, that were formerly adopted with such success to prevent smuggling. When peace returns, the high duties on wines, brandies,

dies, and teas, will defeat their object, and even at present they have not been found to answer to the expectations that were formed of their produce. The new plan adopted of increasing old taxes to produce more revenue, instead of seeking out for fresh objects of taxation, is evidently erroneous, and one that cannot be carried far. I say more, it has in many instances been already carried too far, and a fatal deficiency will soon be apparent, arising from that very cause. Let not the nation or the Minister be led into error; for in finance, action and reaction are closely joined and connected; if once a real deficiency arises, it will increase rapidly, and bring with it innumerable evils. The derangement of individuals—want of credit and confidence will all follow in the same ghastly group.

There is one subject more, and I have done with the administration of Mr. Addington. The Peace of Amiens having, at the time, met with the approbation of all but the Grenville party, let us examine whether the war rose out of that peace, or out of other circumstances.

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The unforeseen difficulties about Malta are represented to be the real cause of the war; but is it not very probable, that the ambitious Bonaparte, having reduced one half of the continent to subjection, and having insulted the other with impunity, on being informed that we had men of *no talents* at the helm; that they were only Ministers of peace; that they must obey his will or lose their places, conceived that he might with impunity insult a nation governed by such men? Our army, he was given to understand, was disorganized, and our navy dismantled; in short, the British Lion having been pourtrayed with his teeth drawn, and his claws cut, abandoned by Minerva, and conducted by a new Prince of Peace, was it not natural for a man of such a character to act the bully, and attempt to become the master? Yes, I say it was natural; but, had the truth been told, had the despot known that, though pacific, the Minister and the nation were resolved to part with no rights, nor to suffer any degradation, the attempt would not have been made, and war would not have followed so abruptly. It is well known that the Consul committed himself rashly, in the heat of passion, and under the false impression of our
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fear and inability ; and when he discovered his error, it was too late to reconcile his pride with his interest, and the latter was sacrificed.

I am inclined to acquit the Minister of having brought on the war by the peace he concluded ; but I do in my conscience think that the Foxites and the Grenvilles did in that matter bear no light hand. I know they acted on principles diametrically opposite to each other ; but they both tended at last towards the same point. Mr. Fox had represented the nation as lucky in having been able to purchase peace on almost any conditions ; Mr. Windham had described it as unable to renew the war. Bonaparte must have heard of the superior abilities of those men ; their patriotism and good intention he could have no reason to doubt ; how, then, could he fail to give credit to their assertions ? He must think that Britain's defences were broken down ; and, according to the principles on which he had all along acted, the temptation held out was greater than he could be expected to resist. I maintain, that if Bonaparte gave credit to the assertions of Mr. Fox and Mr. Windham, that alone was sufficient to bring on the war ; nor do I see any
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reason for his either being ignorant of their assertions, or discrediting them : I therefore think it fair to conclude, that they were the immediate cause of hostilities. As for Mr. Pitt, and those who acted with him, it is impossible to drag them into this part of the business, which was conducted entirely without their interference, either directly or indirectly.

In taking a review of the conduct of the last and present Ministers towards each other, I cannot conceive a breach of faith on either side, such as has been represented in the pamphlets of their different adherents ; neither do I see grounds for those repeated cries of weakness and want of talents which come from all quarters, and are directed against the present Ministers ; but I have no doubt that, if his Majesty's Ministers do not assume an attitude of a more resolute nature, they will be compelled to abandon their post ; but if they do, the confusion will only thereby be increased ; for those who now join in the chase will be united no longer. Mr. Pitt differs in no essential point from the present Ministers ; Mr. Windham and the Grenvilles differ in almost every thing ; being of opinion that no peace can exist between revolutionary France

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and monarchical England. Mr. Fox again draws as much the other way, and sees no reason why we should go to war at all. A commercial contest is all that he thinks natural or necessary ; and it would not be amiss, upon this principle, if he were to get his friend, the Duke of Norfolk, as President of the Society for the Encouragement of Arts and Manufactures, to offer a gold medal, to be contended for by the two nations, and given to that which shall first find out an antidote against future warfare and aggression.

With regard to the public in all this, it scarcely knows how to form an opinion. Seriously impressed with the dangers that await the country, but unable to reconcile the strange and contradictory theories of political men, it depends chiefly on the national spirit and unanimity for that safety which is so necessary, and for the preservation of those liberties that are to us deservedly so dear.

If there are yet any men, whether in or out of place, who would dare to impede national business for their private ends, they deserve the curse of their country. This is not a common period,

period, when a few changes being effected, all will return into its ordinary routine:—No, we are on the eve of the greatest victory that ever blest, or the most terrible disaster that ever befell, any nation ; let us unite in every way to serve the common cause, and, for the moment, forgetting our private concerns, let us live only for the general preservation ; and when that is once secured, the selfish passions may again assume that sway which nature has ordained, and which is perhaps necessary for the existence of society.

FINIS.



